

The Assistant Pastor

February, 1931



For Fifty Years
Mr. and Mrs. Elling Ellingson

The Assistant Pastor

Published and edited by the pastor of the Jerico and Saude Lutheran churches affiliated with the Norwegian Synod of the Synodical Conference.

Church Directory

H. M. Tjernagel, Pastor

SAUDE

Trustees: Iver Ellingson, H. Larson, O. N. Anderson.
Treasurer: A. G. Vaala.
Secretary: John Natvig.
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Iver Natvig, president; Mrs. Carl Miller, secretary; Miss Anna Vaala, treasurer.
Cemetery Committee: Alf Vaala, H. O. Natvig, John Borlaug, Anna Vaala, Lena Landsverk.

JERICO

Trustees: Alvie O. Knutson, O. Firkenstad, Fred Amman.
Treasurer: J. A. Robinson.
Secretary: J. A. Knutson.
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. J. A. Knutson, president; Mrs. C. O. Knutson, secretary; Mrs. A. N. Anderson, treasurer.

Standing Services

JERICO

First Sunday, Norwegian, 10:45 a. m.
Third Sunday, English, 10:45 a. m.
Saturday School every Saturday, 9:30 a. m.
Confirmation class, 2 p. m. Fridays.

SAUDE

Second Sunday, Norwegian, 10:45 a. m.
Fourth Sunday, English, 10:45 a. m.
Saturday School, 2 p. m.
Confirmation class, 9:30 a. m. Fridays.
Fifth Sunday by special announcement.

The following was omitted in the January issue:
Ole O. Anderson Jr., \$5.00 to current expense fund, Jerico.

Anna Sylvia, born December 11, 1930, was baptized January 25th. Parents: John Borlaug and wife Clara nee Johnson. Sponsors: Mr. and Mrs. Enus Ferkingstad, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Borlaug.

February 1, 1881, a cowboy out of the West, aided and abetted by Lewis Johnson and Johanna Halvorson, in spite of a snow storm, picked up one of our native girls and took her to Cresco where the two were declared husband and wife, and but for snow-bound railroads would have carried her off to the West the very next day.

For a long time traffic was tied up; not till the month of May did the young couple reach the plains of Nebraska where they believed the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow was to be found.

When the winter storms were spent and they settled down to tame the prairie that had known little else than the moccasined foot of the Indian and the hoof of the buffalo, they discovered that the storm of life was raging. In the sod-hut, however, there was love's peace and calm, and the smile of the baby and the patter of little feet on the earth floor, made the dug-out Home Sweet Home, and with the rising sun they sallied forth daily with renewed courage and ambition to give battle to pioneer privations and vicissitudes.

Our cowboy and his girl, Mr. and Mrs. Ellingson, have by now reached well along in the afternoon of their life and, we are glad to know, have promise of a beautiful sunset after a forenoon of threatening clouds.

After helping give Nebraska a start, they returned to Iowa and settled near Mrs. Ellingson's

birthplace, two and one quarter miles north of Saude, where they added acres to acres until they owned and operated one of the larger farms of the community. When the days drew nigh that a full grain-sack looked heavy to Mr. Ellingson and the milkmaid, Mrs. Ellingson, hesitated to sit down to a kicking cow, and when they went to bed in the evening tired and stiff in all joints and got up in the morning tired and stiff still, they decided to rest through the day too.

And so they built a pretty, modern home for themselves not far from their church and cemetery, nor from their old home, and not so far away but that their sons and grandchildren and their old neighbors could drop in every day if they wished—and their pastor too—for a cup of coffee.

Isn't this a beautiful evening of life? And there is no one to begrudge them their joy and serenity. They are enjoying the fruits of the sweat of their own brows, their own thriftiness, their own forethought, all of which they acknowledge as granted them by a gracious and loving Heavenly Father.

On the fiftieth anniversary of their wedding day, a host of friends and relatives from far and near celebrated the big day with them at the home of their son Nels. A daughter from Missouri, another from western Iowa, a sister and nephew from Nebraska, a sister-in-law 86 years old from Riceville, Iowa, relatives from Des Moines and St. Paul, friends from Cresco, friends from Lawler, not to speak of the many local friends, were there; everybody, it seemed, was there, even the bridesmaid and best man of fifty years ago, Johanna Halvorson and Lewis Johnson, better known to this generation as Mrs. Hoffland and Louie Swede. It was a grand and happy day.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Ellingson, if we live we shall gather about you once more after not many months or years, to lower you into your graves. May that be a happy day to your many relatives and friends also in the sure hope that you have been preserved in the Christian faith and hope, and have died in the Lord.

Sermon Preached at Anne Vaala's Funeral

January 21, 1931. Text: 1 John 4, 7-21.

The God of Love has been and, by the grace of God, shall be the main subject of every funeral sermon preached in this church. No exception will be made today although circumstances demand that more reference be made to the deceased than is our wont.

We shall on the basis of our text with the aid of the Holy Spirit, proclaim the Love of God with the purpose of glorifying His Holy Name, bringing comfort to the mourners and to give instruction and admonition to all present.

In our text the statement, "God is Love," is twice made. Once it is stated that "love is of God." Love, dear friends, is to such an extent and degree the very essence of God that "if we love one another, God dwelleth in us," verse 12. In verse 16 it says, "God is Love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God."

God and Love are inseparable. God without Love is as impossible as the sun without light; yea, more impossible for the sun can and will perish and with it light, but God cannot perish and love cease

to be. Our God of Love is eternal. A loveless god is not the God of the Bible, it is the god that the spiritually blind see, just as the lightless sun is the sun that the physically blind see.

And His love is not a sentimental and, more or less, selfish love of a choice few here and there. It is an all embracing, unselfish, eternal love that passeth understanding; it reaches out to all sons and daughters of Adam. Note: I did not say, "reaching out to all *His* sons and daughters." I said: All the *children of Adam*, the entire fallen human race, the whole sin-sick world.

"While we were yet enemies." He wrote it indelibly with His heart's blood that He loved us. When He made His unmistakable declarations as well as when He performed His wondrous manifestations of love, there was nothing but sinners to love. When the Father—verse 14—sent the Son to the Savior of the World there was nothing but enemies to save.

Be assured, dear mourners and friends, GOD IS LOVE, for "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" "that we might live through Him." "God hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us." "With His stripes we are healed."

God grant us all the faith to say with St. Paul: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

And now as redeemed ones let us heed the admonition of verse 7. "Beloved let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us." "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God is in him." "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

Through love to one another and the fruits of such love the Christian manifests, reveals His faith in Jesus and his love for God and man. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Another outward manifestation of sonship with God is given us in v. 15, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God."

Many will here think: "Yes, but who answers to these measurements, surely not I." God be gracious unto us, dear friends, and give us faith which grows and love that increases and a zeal that persistently "follows after" as did Saint Paul, "if that we may apprehend—gain—that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Take courage from the promise, "Whosoever hungers and thirsts after righteousness shall be filled."

When the question, who can answer to the measurements of a child of God as given in our text, came to me I admit my thoughts sought out the deceased as such a one and I am hardly mistaken when I surmise that many others here present did the same. Here we must have a care and not permit ourselves to build our comfort and hope in this sad hour upon the beautiful and apparently perfect life of the deceased, for we know from the Word of God that, "All have gone astray." The Love of God through Christ Jesus our Redeemer

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is and must be the foundation for our hope and comfort if it is to withstand the many fiery tests it will receive.

Dear mourners, I think I know how your hearts are torn between hope and doubt. I too have been assailed by doubts. Am I doing right to give Christian burial to one who sought death at her own hand? Am I belittling a sin and endangering the souls of my flock and the community in general? I have found comfort and assurance in the Word of God with which I try to comfort you. It has been a help to me also to have the example of experienced brethren in the faith to guide me. I shall relate some of these in the hope that it may be a help to you too.

A student, while home on his Christmas vacation, had to suffer the grief of finding his mother dead by her own act. A professor, for fifty years a faithful pastor and distinguished theologian in our church, and personally acquainted in the sorely afflicted home, stated that he had known the woman to be an exemplary, happy Christian wife and mother and that he did not mourn without hope while without such knowledge of a consistently Christian life he could not have hope.

Another instance is the case of an ungodly man of the world who in spite of admonition continued in sin and enmity to the Church. He sought death at his own hands, but did not succeed in causing immediate death. The pastor whom he had spurned, a well known pastor of the old Synod, was called and was with him many hours before he died. The pastor went home happy believing that a soul was as a brand brought out of the fire, and he could and did give the former scoffer Christian burial.

How different from these is not the case before us in that it offers so much more room for hope and assurance. We saw her mentality giving way. When her mind was clear we heard her make confession of sin and of faith in the forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ. With that fresh in our memories we can turn to our text and find a wonderful balm in the words, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." It is true we had to see her mind give way again and again, but at one time when she was wholly herself, we had the delight of seeing her receive the Lord's Supper with very evident joy and strengthening of her faith and hope.

We have no memories of her rejection nor even neglect of the means of grace at any time, neither of unbridled sinfulness at any time during her life. But we do have a thousand tokens of her uprightness and the sincerity of her Christianity.

Even after the rash deed was done we had the privilege for many hours to minister to her, bodily and spiritually, and to hear her confession of sin and of faith in the forgiveness of sin through Christ our Savior. Weep not therefore, dear friends and mourners, as they that have no hope, but rejoice in the Lord!

"Yes, but why should God permit such a thing to happen?"

Be still, my heart, and know that God is God. It is not for us mortals to know the whys and wherefores of God's inscrutable ways. Bleeding heart, be healed and rest in the blessed assurance that GOD IS LOVE.

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